

Roberta Gordenstein, Ph.D.
CT
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“GPO and WEP: Policies Affecting Pensions from Work Not Covered by Social Security”

I am writing to ask for your support regarding the inequity in the Social Security laws related to public school teachers.

I am a disabled person suffering from the effects of childhood polio. In spite of this, I worked twenty years in the Hartford public schools and have earned a teacher's pension in Connecticut.

When that job became too physically demanding for me, I went back to school and earned a Ph.D. Since then, I have worked long enough as a college professor to earn the 40 quarters necessary to collect Social Security.

Because I had two different careers, the benefits I earned at each one are roughly half of what a person with one career would have. Thus, I count on both of these to provide money in retirement.

I just retired in May and I have learned that under the current law, the amount of my earned Social Security benefits will be cut almost in half because of my teacher's pension (The Windfall Elimination Provision, 1977). Also, because of the Government Pension Offset, my spouse who is also a retired public school teacher would not be entitled to collect any benefits upon my death.

These provisions are totally unjust for people who have worked a lifetime and earned benefits they are entitled to. I am certain you recognize the inequity of these provisions and would greatly appreciate anything you can do to help rectify this injustice on behalf of dedicated teachers who are seeking equal treatment for their years of service.

Sincerely yours,

Roberta Gordenstein, Ph.D.